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# Articles in Today's Clips

**Thursday, July 24, 2008**

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# **Woman charged after being found allegedly drunk in car with child**

## **Good Samaritan alerted police to dangerous situation**

By KORIE WILKINS • FREE PRESS STAFF WRITER • July 24, 2008

A Taylor woman will be in an Oakland County courtroom next week after police say she was found slumped over the wheel of her truck with her 2-year-old son inside.

A Good Samaritan called police at about 8 p.m. Tuesday after seeing the woman, who appeared intoxicated, in the Lowe's on the 1800 block of Telegraph Road.

Capt. Steve Cook said the man, 40, of Commerce Township followed the woman around the store and noticed she was stumbling and bumping into things. She was alone in the store. Her child, Cook said, had been left in the car.

The child, Cook said, was not harmed and is staying with relatives. "It could have been a tragedy," Cook said.

Cook said the man followed her out to her truck and watched her drive to another parking spot. The man also noticed the boy in her backseat.

When police arrived, they found Marlene Patricia Chapman, 36, slumped over the wheel of her truck. She appeared intoxicated and failed field sobriety tests. Her blood-alcohol level, Cook said, was measured at .29 — more than three times the legal limit of .08.

"That's pretty drunk," he said.

Chapman was charged earlier this week with operating a vehicle while impaired, third offense; child endangerment and driving with a suspended license. She remains in the Oakland County Jail on a \$25,000 bond.

She'll be back in court July 29 for a hearing. It is unknown if she has an attorney.

# Hearing set for child welfare settlement

DETROIT FREE PRESS

JULY 24, 2008

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A federal judge has scheduled a hearing for preliminary approval of a court settlement that would mean sweeping changes in Michigan's child welfare system.

Terms of the settlement call for a drastic decrease in workers' caseloads, an increased push to find permanent homes for Michigan's 6,000 legal orphans and the hiring of an outside monitor to oversee the changes.

The changes would cost about \$50 million more a year for the next four years, the state Human Services Department has estimated.



Thursday, July 24, 2008

## Abraham ordered to stand trial

### His attorney says police officers witnessed handshake, not drug deal

Jennifer Chambers / The Detroit News

**PONTIAC** -- Police officers approached Nathaniel Abraham from multiple sides as he stood outside the open trunk of a red Cadillac at a Pontiac gas station.

One patrol car parked nose to nose with Abraham's vehicle as officers on foot crossed the Sunoco parking lot on Perry Street. But it was state Trooper Chad Gruenwald who approached Abraham, one of Michigan's youngest convicted killers, from behind. On Wednesday, Gruenwald told a judge what he saw the morning of May 30.

"I saw him reach into his waist, under his coat, pull out a dark-colored bag and throw it into the trunk. Then he raised his hands," Gruenwald testified at Abraham's preliminary examination on felony drug possession charges.

Pontiac Officer Kathy Mickens retrieved the bag, a dark purple cloth sack from a bottle of Crown Royal whiskey. She said she and Gruenwald looked inside and found 254 blue and purple pills that later tested positive for ecstasy.

On Wednesday, 50th District Judge Michael Martinez heard the testimony and ordered Abraham to stand trial in Oakland Circuit Court on the drug possession charges.

Abraham's attorney, Byron Pitts, told the judge the officers witnessed just a handshake between Abraham and another man on a bicycle moments earlier at the gas station -- not a drug transaction -- and that police had no probable cause to open the bag or search Abraham's car.

Martinez denied Pitts' request to dismiss the case, which is now headed to circuit court for arraignment Aug. 4.

Abraham made international headlines in 1997, when at age 11 he shot and killed 18-year-old Ronnie Greene. A jury convicted him of second-degree murder. A judge declined to sentence Abraham as an adult and ordered him to be held in juvenile detention until age 21.

Abraham was released in January 2007.

During Wednesday's hearing, Pontiac Officer Jason Teelander told the judge he had no idea who Abraham was when he called for backup after witnessing Abraham and a man on a bicycle exchange "something with their hands" at the gas station.

Teelander, a 12-year veteran of the force who is considered an expert in narcotics enforcement, said he had seen such a transaction hundreds of times in his career.

"I believe it was a street-level drug sale," he said.

Abraham remains free on bond but is required to wear a global positioning system tether and is confined to his mother's home except for going to school and to church on Sundays.

Pitts said he has not decided whether Abraham will take the stand in his defense.

He does not expect Abraham to go to prison.

"We will have evidence to contradict what happened," Pitts said outside court.

Abraham left the Pontiac courthouse with his sister and grandfather without comment.

**Find this article at:**

<http://www.detroitnews.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080724/METRO/807240382>

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# Table not secured in wall in death of 3-year-old Jahnavi Thompson

Posted by Shannon Murphy | The Flint Journal July 24, 2008 14:02PM

**FLINT, Michigan** -- A folding table that fell and killed a 3-year-old boy at a day care center last week was not secured properly into the wall, police said.

The table also had something mechanically wrong with it, said Flint police Lt. Tim Johnson. It is unknown exactly what was wrong with the table.

Jahnavi Thompson died after the table fell on him while he was at Little Characters Childcare, which is housed in St. Mark Missionary Baptist Church and school, 3020 E. Dupont St.

Police and the state Department of Human Services are investigating the incident.

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**HOMELESS SHELTERS FOR YOUNG WOMEN**

# Detroit center helps women in move from homelessness

BY NAOMI R. PATTON • FREE PRESS STAFF WRITER • July 24, 2008

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Diamon Amos grew up middle class with a pretty good life.

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She graduated from King High School in 2006. She attended Wayne State University for a year, working two jobs at a restaurant and a shoe store.

"I never thought I'd end up in a shelter," said Amos, now 20 and living at Alternatives for Girls -- the only shelter in southeast Michigan for homeless young women ages 15 to 21. She is among hundreds of girls the southwest Detroit shelter has served since it opened in 1987.

"I like being here, but I don't want to stay here," Amos said about AFG, which she learned about from a woman at her church. Amos wants to return to college and become a social worker.

For now, however, she is among thousands of homeless young women in their late teens and early 20s nationwide who -- never a part of the foster care system -- find themselves on the streets without dedicated resources to help them.

"It's life-and-death stuff," said Amanda Good, AFG cofounder, president and chief executive officer, about the young women who leave dangerous or violent homes, poor homes, or because of family conflict.

Nan Roman, president and chief executive officer of the Washington-based National Alliance to End Homelessness, said the number of youths in this situation is "legally appalling" because many of them would be "clear candidates" for state jurisdiction.

One of the biggest problems facing this largely female demographic is that there are few shelters or agencies in Detroit or elsewhere in Michigan that are licensed by the state to house minors not accompanied by their parents.

"This should not be left to the homeless agencies," Roman said. "The homeless system is underfunded."

Good said AFG relies on vital support from groups like the Skillman Foundation and the McGregor Fund, but the

economy means local, state and federal funding and fund-raising are "very lean." A few years ago, AFG received as much as \$250,000 in federal block grant funding; this year it was \$67,000.

"The need is overwhelming," she said.

Residents stay at the shelter from a couple of months in the short-term program to 18 months in the long-term program. The daily routine typically involves attendance at Transition to Independent Living class, where the girls learn how to create a résumé, job hunt, pay bills and parent. Secondary school-age residents are required to attend school or get their GEDs.

"The message is, you have to be able to support yourself in a legal and safe way," Good said. "It's a culture of progress and adhering to goals."

Antonique White, 20, was relentless, calling to get into AFG for months. She dropped out of Murray-Wright High School months before her scheduled 2006 graduation and admittedly was "rebellious" with her mother.

"I just wish I would have listened," White said.

The mother of 1-year-old Jaiden and expecting another child in August, White has lived at the shelter for five months. Inspired by her stay, she now wants to go to college to become a social worker.

"Being here helps you stay focused," White said. "I want to get my GED ... get a job ... do something with my life."

*Contact **NAOMI R. PATTON** at 313-223-4485 or [npatton@freepress.com](mailto:npatton@freepress.com). Open houses at Alternatives For Girls are available by appointment at 903 W. Grand Blvd. in Detroit throughout the year. Learn more at [www.alternativesforgirls.org](http://www.alternativesforgirls.org), or call 313-361-4000, Ext. 230.*

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# Study of area homeless people planned

## Groups to do interviews today in metro Detroit

BY ERIC D. LAWRENCE • FREE PRESS STAFF WRITER • July 24, 2008

The number of homeless people in metro Detroit should become a bit clearer after tonight.

As a kind of warm-up for a required count of homeless people in January, the Homeless Action Network of Detroit, University of Detroit Mercy's Leadership Development Institute and other groups are organizing a similar event today.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development requires a count in January at least once every two years to help determine how much funding goes toward homeless services.

This week's event is an optional, warm weather count that John Daniels, director of the Leadership Development Institute, said provides opportunities to learn about homeless patterns and to interview homeless people, which can be difficult on a frigid January night.

"To help people become more aware of homelessness and the face of homelessness" is a positive thing, he said.

When Daniels first participated in a count of homeless people in 2005, "it really blew me away," he said, noting that the number of homeless people was much higher than he had expected. He said the number of homeless people in Detroit, Hamtramck and Highland Park could be between 15,000 and 20,000.

Homelessness has costs and consequences beyond the effects on the homeless people. Society pays for indigent care either directly or indirectly, such as through higher incarceration rates, Daniels said.

Tonight's event features teams of people fanning out across areas of Detroit, Hamtramck and Highland Park to count unsheltered homeless people. Up to 200 people are expected to take part.

A key part of each team is the street ambassador, a current or recently homeless person. "These street ambassadors are the ones who know the street best and the humanity of our homeless neighbors," a news Study of area homeless people planned release about the count said.

Contact **ERIC D. LAWRENCE** at [elawrence@freepress.co](mailto:elawrence@freepress.co)

July 23, 2008

## **COURT DISALLOWS CHILD SUPPORT LIENS AGAINST PROPERTY OWNED JOINTLY BY DEBTOR AND SPOUSE**

In a case that presented the court the first opportunity to reconcile the laws on the issue, judges ruled in a Wednesday published appellate decision that courts may not place a lien for unpaid child support against properties held jointly by a married couple, unless the debt is in both property owners' names.

In the case of *Walters v. Leech* ([COA docket No. 277180](#)), the Court of Appeals upheld the trial court's opinion that in order to avoid confusion, courts must read the Support and Parenting Time Enforcement Act, which authorizes liens for unpaid support, in concert with other laws governing liens on tenancy by the entirety (property held by a married couple, which they have joint but not individual rights to).

While the child support law allows a lien against "a person" who has neglected to pay child support, tenancies in the entirety aren't considered owned by a person, but by "an entity," Judge Jane Beckering wrote in the opinion signed by Judges William Murphy and Richard Bandstra.

Judges must justify their ruling with the common law practice that a lien for an individual's debt can't be placed against a property that a tenancy by the entirety owns, the ruling said, adding that whether the support act allows liens to those properties is "an issue of first impression involving statutory interpretation and a question of jurisprudential significance."

Because the Legislature didn't expressly seek to change common law practice when it last amended child support law in 2006, judges should assume that lawmakers intended the common law practice to stand, she said, especially since in recent years the Legislature has codified other laws dealing with liens to expressly state that a lien may not be placed against a tenancy in the entirety unless the debt from which the lien stems is the responsibility of both people in the marriage.

Judges rejected the Friend of the Court's argument that it can place a lien against a property with the authority of a 2002 U.S. Supreme Court ruling that allowed tax liens against tenancies in the entirety.

That opinion specifically referred to federal tax liens and courts may not extend it to state child support liens, the present decision said.

Judges also rejected the FOC's argument that they should allow the liens because public policy strongly supports collecting overdue child support.

"Although there is an important interest in children being supported by their non-custodial parents, there is also an important interest in protecting an innocent spouse's property," the opinion said. "Selling a married couple's home in order to satisfy the debt of only one spouse is certainly against public policy.

"A child support lien may only be imposed against the property if the tenancy by the entirety terminates *and* the payer is left with an individual interest in the property against which a lien may arise."



July 24, 2008

## Lansing-area jobless rate at 7.2 percent

### Midday update

*Kathryn Prater*  
*kprater@lsj.com*

The Lansing area's jobless rate was unchanged in June, the Department of Labor and Economic Growth said today.

The region's seasonally unadjusted unemployment rate remained at 7.2 percent for the second consecutive month. But it was up sharply from a 6.1 percent rate in June 2007.

There were 17,800 people without jobs in June, up from 15,300 one year earlier.

However, Lansing's unemployment rate still is less than the state's, which in June stayed at 8.5 percent for the second consecutive month. However that was a seasonally adjusted rate, meaning seasonal factors were taken into account.

On a seasonally unadjusted basis, the state's jobless rate was at 8.7 percent in June, up from 8.3 percent in May and 7.3 percent in June 2007.

For more on this story, read Friday's Lansing State Journal.

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July 24, 2008

## Jobless rate changes mixed in Michigan markets

*The Associated Press*

LANSING — Seasonally unadjusted unemployment rates rose in nine of Michigan's 17 regional labor markets in June.

State officials said today the jobless rates worsened in some areas because it is difficult to find summer employment. In other areas, the end of auto industry labor disputes helped improve the jobless rates.

Regional unemployment rates are not seasonally adjusted. But national and state unemployment rates are adjusted to remove seasonal influences such as production cycles, holidays, model changeovers in the auto industry and climate conditions.

Michigan's June seasonally adjusted jobless rate was 8.5 percent. The state has had the nation's highest annual average unemployment rate since 2006.

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## Michigan Department of Human Services News Release

Contact: Jan Berry (517) 335-4725

Regina Funkhouser, Michigan Heart Gallery coordinator (800) 589-6273  
Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange

### **Michigan Heart Gallery 2008 Exhibit in Lansing**

Exhibit helps find adoptive families for foster children

July 23, 2008

**What:** The 2008 Michigan Heart Gallery, a touring photographic exhibit featuring stirring portraits of 60 Michigan foster children who are waiting to be adopted, is on display in the Steve and Barry's wing of the Lansing Mall in Lansing from July 22 - August 15. The photographs in the Heart Gallery were taken by more than 40 professional photographers who donated their time, talent and resources to take the pictures that help capture the spirit of the children in the foster care system.

The Michigan Heart Gallery is a collaborative effort between the Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange, the Adoptive Family Support Network and the Michigan Department of Human Services. Today, in Michigan, there are more than 4,000 children without families. Recruitment activities such as the Heart Gallery remind people that there are many children in Michigan who are waiting to be adopted into a loving and caring home.

**When:** July 22 - August 15

**Where:** The Lansing Mall, Steve and Barry's wing, 5330 West Saginaw Highway, Lansing, Mich.

#### Ten Things you should know:

1. At any given time there are about 4,000 children in Michigan's foster care system who are available and waiting to be adopted.
2. Last year in Michigan almost 2,600 children were adopted through Michigan's foster care system.
3. Most families who adopt are also licensed foster parents or relatives. In fact, last year in Michigan, 93 percent of children adopted from the foster care system were adopted by a foster parent or relative.
4. All adoptive families must go through a family assessment process that includes an education component, background checks, and an exploration of the family's interest in adopting.
5. Because the needs of each child are different, many different types of families are needed. You don't have to be married to adopt, and you don't need to be wealthy or own your own home.
6. Many of the children waiting for adoption are school-age or older, may need to be adopted along with siblings, or may have special placement needs.

7. About 500 Michigan children between the ages of 18 and 21 transition or “age out” of the foster care system annually. Studies of youths who have left foster care without being adopted have shown they are more likely than those in the general population to not finish high school, be unemployed, and be dependent on public assistance. Many find themselves in prison, homeless, or becoming parents at an early age.
8. The Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange is an information and referral program that can help answer some of your questions about adoption. Contact us at (800) 589-6273 or visit our Web site at [www.mare.org](http://www.mare.org)
9. The Heart Gallery is a project of the Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange. It is our hope the Michigan Heart Gallery will inspire prospective parents to adopt an older child so these children can become part of a loving family and have a chance for a brighter, happier future.
10. Consider fostering, adopting or mentoring a waiting child!